



# Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train

## **Revised Final Program Environmental Impact Report**

September 1, 2010



# Background

- July 2008 - Final Program EIR and decisions
- August 2008 - CEQA litigation filed
- November 2009 - Final court judgment
- December 2009 - 2008 decisions rescinded
- March 2010 - Revised Draft Program EIR
- August 2010 - Revised Final Program EIR



# Town of Atherton Litigation

- Requiring corrective work to comply with CEQA:
  - Adequacy of Project Description (San Jose to Gilroy)
  - Recirculation after Union Pacific Railroad announced its unwillingness to allow use of its right-of-way
  - Land use impacts along San Francisco Peninsula
  - CEQA finding of fact on vibration impacts



# Revised Draft Program EIR

- Corrected project description – San Jose to Gilroy
  - Land use/property impacts
  - Monterey Highway impacts
  - Keesling shade trees impacts
- Clarified location assumptions about HST track and UPRR freight right of way
  - Land use/property impacts for all alignment alternatives
- Impacts on UPRR freight operations/spurs
- Pacheco Pass Network Alternative serving San Francisco via San Jose still recommended as preferred



# Revised Draft Program EIR

- March 4, 2010 – Revised Draft Program EIR on website
- March 11, 2010 – 45-day comment period begins
- March 11, 2010 – Revised Draft Program EIR provided to 16 libraries
- March 12-15, 2010 – Notice of Availability distributed to a mailing list of approx 53,000 individuals
- March 12, 2010 – Notice of Availability in 8 newspapers
- April 7, 2010 – 2 Public Meetings in San Jose
- April 26, 2010 - comment period closes





# Revised Draft Program EIR

Type of Commenter	Number of Commenters	Number of Comments
State Agencies	2	21
Local Agencies	27	553
Organizations	25	265
Individuals	438	2,803
Public Hearings	53	113
<b>Total</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>3,755</b>



# Revised Final Program EIR

## August 2010 Revised Final Program EIR

- Volume 1 – Revised Final Program EIR (main text)
- Volume 2 – Responses to Comments (copies of comments and responses)
- 2008 Final Program EIR (three volumes)



# Revised Final Program EIR

## Major Issues Raised During Public Comment Period

- Level of Detail
- Ridership Modeling
- Union Pacific Railroad
- Effects on Communities
- Alternatives





# Level of Detail

- The Revised Program EIR (and 2008 Final Program EIR), provides a sufficient level of information for first-tier, programmatic decision making.
- The Program EIR appropriately identifies critical impact differences between Network Alternatives.
- New project-level information does not trigger another round of revision and recirculation of the program document.



# Ridership Modeling

- Ridership model developed by Cambridge Systematics under contract to Metropolitan Transportation Commission
- Developed through standard industry process of model estimation, calibration, and validation
  - Expert peer review at three different stages, 2005 - 2007
  - Peer review contributed to decisions to constrain model variables
- Ridership model publicly available through the MTC
- Model and forecasts are appropriate tools for programmatic environmental analysis for which they have been used



# UC Berkeley ITS Review

- EIR acknowledges UC Berkeley ITS conclusion that ridership model is flawed:
  - ITS report recognizes that Cambridge Systematic followed generally accepted professional standards in carrying out the demand modeling and analysis
  - Board received presentations on ridership from both Professor Brownstone of UC Berkeley ITS and from Cambridge Systematics
  - UC Berkeley ITS Final Report and Cambridge Systematics response both before Board for its consideration
  - U.C. Berkeley ITS has found no indication of bias or rigging
  - Disagreement between academics versus industry practitioner



# Union Pacific Railroad

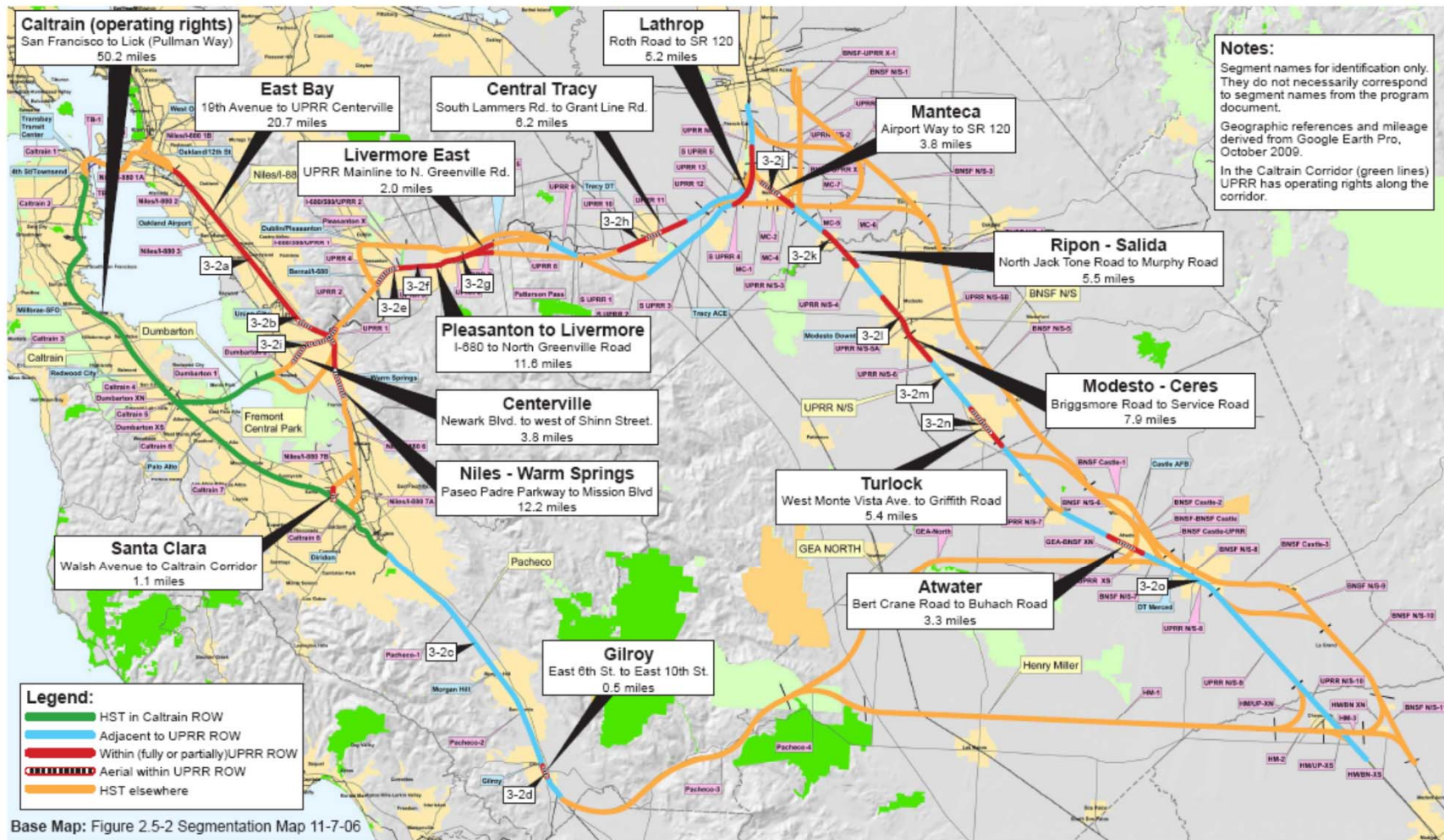
## Revised Final Program EIR Volume 1

- Union Pacific position on its freight rights of way does not render any alternatives infeasible
- Possible to avoid impacts to Union Pacific freight operations during more detailed design





# UPRR Interface Locations





# Union Pacific Railroad

## Revised Final Program EIR Volume 2

- Provides information on safety considerations
- Acknowledges importance of safe, efficient freight rail to state and national economy
- Acknowledges Authority's ongoing, cooperative dialogue with Union Pacific



# Effect on Communities

- EIR acknowledges public concerns about impacts on communities, quality of life
  - Land use effects identified as significant
  - Mitigation strategies proposed
- Higher level of detail demanded in comments part of project-level review



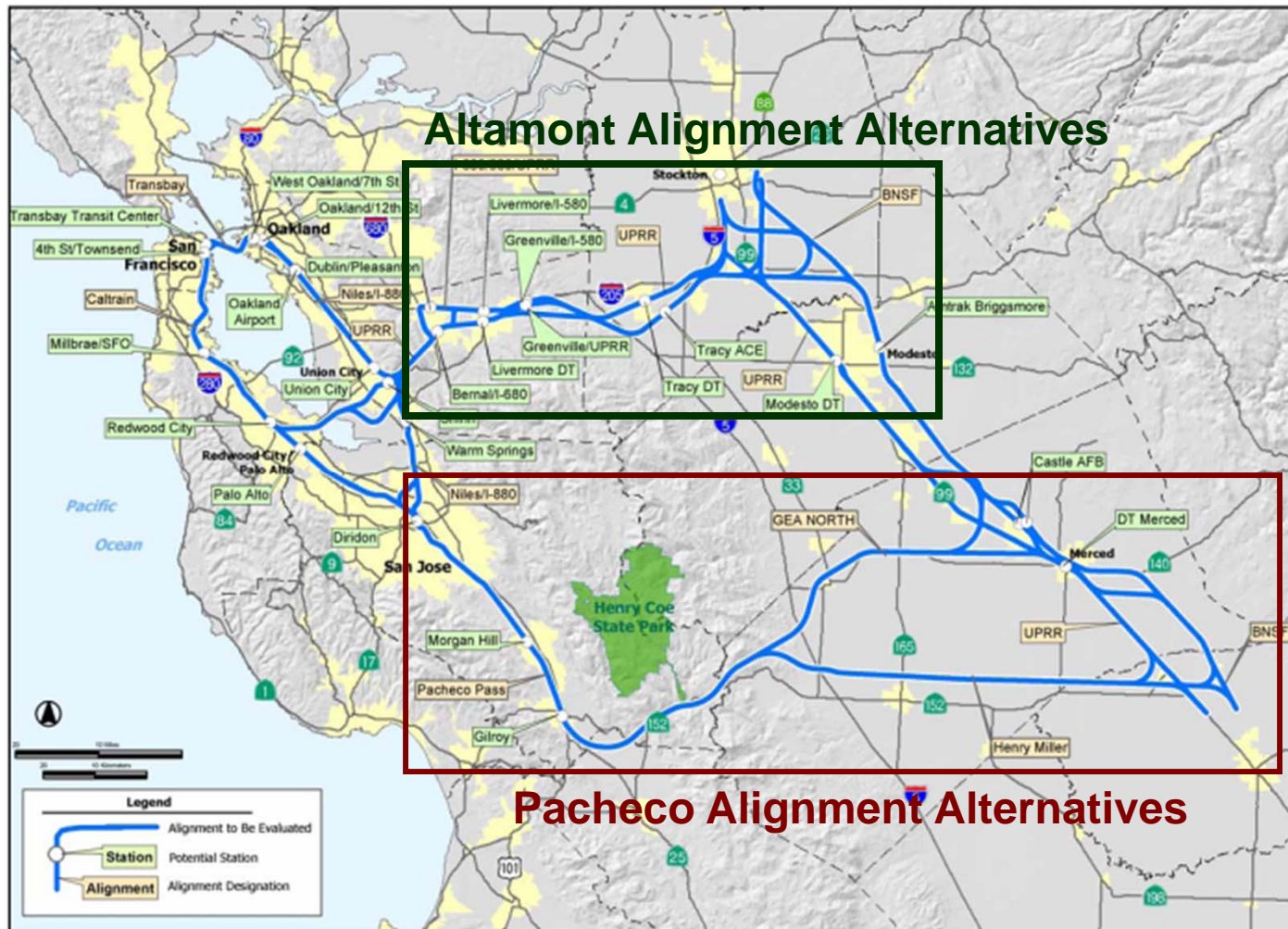
# Alternatives

- Revised Final Program EIR includes reasonable range of alternatives
  - Alternatives studied in EIR show tradeoffs in levels and locations of impact
  - Range of alternatives studied permits a reasoned choice





# Alignment Alternatives



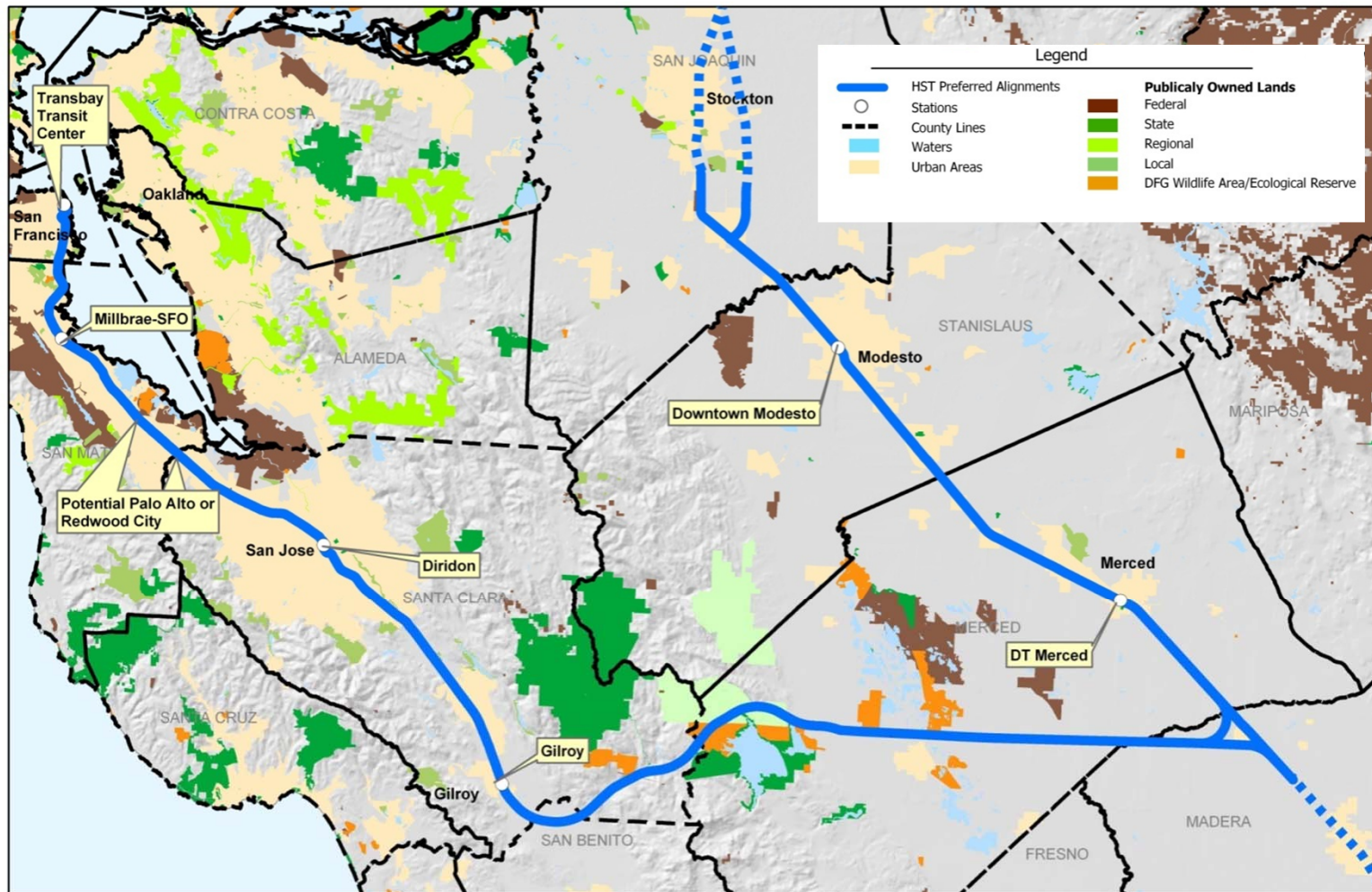
# Preferred Alternative

- **San Francisco to San Jose Corridor:**
  - **Alignment:** Caltrain Corridor (Shared Use)
  - **Stations:** Transbay Transit Center, Millbrae (SFO), Mid-Peninsula Station: Continue to investigate both Palo Alto and Redwood City.
- **San Jose to Central Valley Corridor :**
  - **Alignment:** Pacheco Pass via Henry Miller Road (UPRR Connection)
  - **Stations:** Diridon Station, Gilroy Station (Caltrain) [no Los Banos station]
- **Central Valley Corridor:**
  - **Alignment:** UPRR N/S  
*(At the project level, continue to evaluate BNSF or some combination of UPRR and BNSF)*
  - **Stations:** Downtown Modesto, Downtown Merced
- Castle AFB is identified as one of the options for future study for the location of an HST maintenance facility. No maintenance facility would be located at Los Banos.





# Preferred Alternative



# Why Preferred Alternative

- Best meets the purpose and need for the proposed HST system.
- Minimizes impacts on wetlands, waterbodies, and the environment.
- Best serves the connection between Northern and Southern California.
- Best utilizes the Caltrain corridor.
- Supported by the Bay Area region, City of San Francisco and City of San Jose, agencies, and organizations.

The Corps and EPA have concurred that the Preferred Pacheco Pass Network Alternative would most likely yield the LEDPA.



# Circulation of Document

- August 20, 2010 – Revised Final Program EIR on website
- August 20, 2010 - Revised Final Program EIR distributed to over 925 federal, state, and local agencies, elected officials, Native American groups, other groups, and individuals who commented on Revised Draft Program EIR and 2008 Final Program EIR.
- August 23, 2010 – Revised Final Program EIR provided to 16 libraries
- August 23, 2010 – Notice of Availability and Notice of Consideration distributed to a mailing list of approx 53,000 individuals
- August 20-25, 2010 – Notice of Availability and Notice of Consideration published in 11 newspapers.





# Conclusion

Staff recommends that the Board certify the Revised Final Program EIR for compliance with CEQA and proceed to make new decisions after hearing public comment.



# Questions & Answers

